FIRST SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In compliance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. §1.56 and in accordance with the practice under 37 C.F.R. §§1.97 and 1.98, the Examiner's attention is directed to the documents listed on the enclosed Form PTO-1449. Copies of the listed documents are also enclosed.

English abstracts that accompany the cited documents provide concise explanations of relevance.

Applicants certify under 37 C.F.R. §1.97(e)(1) that each item of information contained in the subject information disclosure statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this statement. Specifically, these documents were first cited in a Japanese Office Action dated October 27, 2004, in a corresponding Japanese patent application. A copy of the Office Action that issued on that related application is enclosed.

It is respectfully requested that the above information be considered by the Examiner and that a copy of the enclosed Form PTO-1449 be returned indicating that such information has been considered.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

Attorney for Applicants

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Registration No. 32,533

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| FORM PTO 1449 (modified) | | | | | ATTY DOCKET NO. APPLICATION NO. 09/542,460 | | | | | |
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| LIST OF REFERENCES CITED BY APPLICANT(S) (Use several sheets if necessary) Submitted to the PTO: November 12, 2004 | | | | | FILING DATE G | | | GROUP 2673 | | |
| U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS | | | | | | | | | | |
| *EXAMINER DOCUMENT | | | | | | | | | FILING DATE | |
| INITIAL | | NUMBER | DATE | | NAME | | CLASS | SUBCLASS | IF APPROPRIATE | |
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| FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | DOCUMENT NUMBER | DATE | | COUNTRY | | CLASS | SUBCLASS | TRANSLATION YES/NO/ OR ABSTRACT | |
| | | 10-308189 | 11/1998 | | Japan | | | | Abstract | |
| | | 11-85097 | 03/1999 | | Japan | | | | Abstract | |
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| OTHER DOCUMENT(S) (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.) | | | | | | | | | | |
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^{*}EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.